

# REPORT

OF

*THE COMMITTEE,*

TO WHOM WAS REFERRED

*The Message*

OF THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

ON THE

*APPLICATION*

OF

HAMET CARAMALLI.

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17th MARCH, 1806.

REFERRED TO MR. BRADLEY, MR. WRIGHT, MR. BALDWIN, MR.  
SMITH OF MARYLAND, AND MR. TRACY.

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1806.



IN SENATE  
OF THE UNITED STATES.

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MARCH 17, 1806.

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MR. BRADLEY, from the committee to whom was referred the application of Hamet Caramalli, ex-Bashaw of Tripoli, submitted the following

REPORT...

THE ex-Bashaw founds his claim on the justice of the United States, from his services and sufferings in their cause, and from his having been deceived and amused with the prospect of being placed on his throne, as legitimate sovereign of Tripoli, and frequently drawn from eligible situations for the purpose of being made the dupe and instrument of policy, and finally sacrificed to misfortune and wretchedness. The committee, from a full investigation of the documents which have been laid before Congress, with other evidence that has come within their knowledge, are enabled to lay before the Senate a brief statement of facts in relation to the ex-Bashaw, and the result of their deliberations thereon.

This unfortunate prince by the treason and perfidy of his brother, the reigning Bashaw, was driven from his throne, an exile to the regency of Tunis; where the agents of the United



States in the Mediterranean, found him; and as early as August eighteen hundred and one, entered into a convention to co-operate with him, the object of which was to obtain a permanent peace with Tripoli, to place the ex-Bashaw on his throne, and procure indemnification for all expense in accomplishing the same. This agreement was renewed in November following, with encouragement that the United States would persevere, until they had effected the object; and in eighteen hundred and two, when the reigning Bashaw had made overtures to the ex-Bashaw to settle on him the two provinces of Derne and Bengazi, and when the ex-Bashaw was on the point of leaving Tunis, under an escort furnished him by the reigning Bashaw, the agents of the United States prevailed on him to abandon the offer, with assurance that the United States would effectually co-operate, and place him on the throne of Tripoli.

The same engagements were renewed in eighteen hundred and three, and the plan of co-operation so arranged, that the *ex-Bashaw* by his own exertions and force, took possession of the province of *Derne*; but the American squadron, at that time under the command of commodore *Morris*, instead of improving that favorable moment, to co-operate with the *ex-Bashaw*, and to put an end to the war, unfortunately abandoned the Barbary coast, and left the ex-Bashaw to contend solely with all the force of the *reigning Bashaw*, and who, in consequence was obliged, in the fore



part of the year eighteen hundred and four, to give up his conquest of *Derne*, and fly from the fury of the usurper into *Egypt*. These transactions were from time to time, not only communicated by our agents to government, but were laid before Congress in February, eighteen hundred and four, in the documents accompanying the report of the committee of claims on the petition of Mr. Eaton, late consul at *Tunis*, which committee expressed their decided approbation of his official conduct, and to which report the committee beg leave to refer.

In full possession of the knowlege of these facts, the government of the United States, in June, eighteen hundred and four, dispatched commodore Barron, with a squadron into the Mediterranean, and in his instructions, submitted to his entire discretion, the subject of availing himself of the co-operation of the ex-Bashaw, and referring him to Mr. Eaton, as an agent sent out by government for that purpose.

After commodore Barron had arrived on the station in September, eighteen hundred and four, he dispatched Mr. Eaton and captain Hull into Egypt, to find the ex-Bashaw, with instructions to assure him that the commodore would take the most effectual measures with the forces under his command, to co-operate with him against the usurper, his brother, and to establish him in the regency of Tripoli. After encountering many difficulties and dangers, the ex-Bashaw



was found in upper Egypt with the Mamalukes, and commanding the Arabs; the same assurances were again made to him, and a convention was reduced to writing, the stipulations of which had the same objects in view; the United States to obtain a permanent peace and their prisoners, the ex-Bashaw to obtain his *throne*. Under these impressions, and with the fullest confidence in the assurances he had received from the agents of the United States, and even from commodore Barron himself, by one of his (the Bashaw's) secretaries, whom he had sent to wait on the commodore for that purpose, he gave up his prospects in Egypt, abandoned his property in that country, constituted Mr. Eaton general and commander in chief of his forces, and with such an army as he was able to raise and support, marched through the Libyan desert, suffering every hardship incident to such a perilous undertaking; and with his army commanded by general Eaton, aided by O'Bannon and Mann, three American officers, who shared with him the dangers and hardships of the campaign, and whose names their country will forever record with honor, attacked the city of Derne in the regency of Tripoli, on the twenty seventh day of April, one thousand eight hundred and five, and after a well fought battle took the same; and for the first time planted the American colors on the ramparts of a Tripolitan fort. And in several battles afterwards, one of which he fought without the



aid of the Americans, (they having been restrained by orders, not warranted by any policy, issued as appears by Mr. Lear, the American consul,) defeated the army of the usurper, with great slaughter, maintained his conquest, and without the hazard of a repulse, would have marched to the throne of Tripoli, had he been supported by the co-operation of the American squadron, which in honor and good faith he had a right to expect. The committee would here explicitly declare, that in their opinion, no blame ought to attach to commodore Barron, a wasting sickness, and consequent mental as well as bodily debility, had rendered him totally unable to exercise the duties of commanding the squadron, previous to this momentous crisis, and from which he has never recovered; and to this cause alone may be attributed the final failure of the plan of co-operation which appears to have been wisely concerted by the government, and hitherto bravely executed by its officers.

But however unpleasant the task, the committee are compelled by the obligations of truth and duty, to state further, that Mr. Lear, to whom was entrusted the power of negotiating the peace, appears to have gained a complete ascendancy over the commodore, thus debilitated by sickness; or rather, having assumed the command in the name of the commodore,\* to have dictated every mea-

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\* *Extract of a letter from captain Dent.*

“It was generally believed by the officers in the Mediterranean, that Mr. Lear had a great ascendancy over the



sure; to have paralised every military operation by sea and land; and finally, without displaying the fleet or squadron before Tripoli, without consulting even the safety of the ex-Bashaw or his army, against the opinion of all the officers of the fleet, so far as the committee have been able to obtain the same, and of commodore Rodgers (as appears from Mr. Lear's letter† to the secretary of state, dated Syracuse harbor, July 5th, 1805) to have entered into a convention with the reigning Bashaw, by which, contrary to his instructions, he stipulated to pay him sixty thousand dollars, to abandon the ex-bashaw, and to withdraw all aid and assistance from his army. And, although a stipulation was made that the wife and children of the ex-Bashaw should be delivered to him on his

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commodore in all his measures relative to the squadron, and from frequent observations of Mr. Lear's intimacy with the commodore during his debilitated state, I am of the same opinion."

† "I must here pay a tribute of justice to commodore Rodgers, whose conduct during the negotiation on board, was mixed with that manly firmness and evident wish to continue the war, if it could be done with propriety, while he displayed the magnanimity of an American, in declaring that we fought not for conquest, but to maintain our just rights and national dignity, as fully convinced the negotiators that we did not ask but grant peace.

"You will pardon me if I here introduce a circumstance evincive of the spirit of our countrymen. At breakfast this morning, commodore Rodgers observed that if the Bashaw would consent to deliver up our countrymen without making peace, he would engage to give him two hundred thousand instead of sixty thousand dollars, and raise the difference between the two sums from the officers of the navy, who he was perfectly assured, would contribute to it with the highest satisfaction."



withdrawing from the territories of Tripoli, yet that stipulation has not been carried into execution, and it is highly probable was never intended to be. The committee forbear to make any comment on the impropriety of the orders issued to general Eaton to evacuate Derne, five days previous to Mr. Lear's sailing from Malta for Tripoli, to enter on his negotiation; and the honor of the nation forbids any remarks on the unworthy attempt to compel the ex-Bashaw and general Eaton, to give up and abandon their conquest, by withholding supplies from the army at Derne, eight days previous to the commencement of the negotiation; nor will the committee condescend to enter into a consideration of pretended reasons, assigned by Mr. Lear to palliate his management of the affairs of the negotiation; such as, *the danger of the American prisoners in Tripoli, the unfitness of the ships for service, and the want of means to prosecute the war*; they appear to the committee to have no foundation in fact, and are used rather as a veil to cover an inglorious deed, than solid reasons to justify the negotiator's conduct. The committee are free to say, that, in their opinion, it was in the power of the United States, with the force then employed, and a small portion of the sixty thousand dollars, thus improperly expended, to have placed Hamet Caramalli, the rightful sovereign of Tripoli, on his throne; to have obtained their prisoners in perfect safety,† without the payment

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† *Extract from a letter of commodore Rodgers.*  
 "I never thought the prisoners were in danger."



of a cent, with assurance, and probable certainty, of eventual remuneration for all expense; and to have established a peace with the Barbary powers, that would have been secure and permanent, and which would have dignified the name and character of the American people.

Whatever Hamet, the ex-Bashaw, may have said, in his letter of June 29th, 1805, to palliate the conduct which first abandoned and then ruined him, the Senate cannot fail to discern that he was then at Syracuse, in a country of strangers to his merits, and hostile to his nation and religion, and where every circumstance conspired to depress him, which, together with the fear of starving, left him scarcely a moral agent.

Upon these facts, and to carry into effect the principles of duty arising out of them, the only remuneration now left in the power of the United States to make, the committee herewith present a bill for the consideration of the Senate. The committee are confident that the legislature of a free and christian country, can never leave it in the power of a mahometan to say *that they violate their faith, or withhold the operations of justice from one who has fallen a victim to his unbounded confidence in their integrity and honor.*

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‡ *Extract from a letter of lieutenant Wormeley, then a prisoner in Tripoli.*

“I do not believe that there was any danger to be apprehended for our lives, even if general Eaton and Hamet Bashaw had have marched under the walls of Tripoli.”